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At city council meeting

Furloughed employees , mayor's appointments discussed

By MIKE PETROVSKY

The furlough of 11 city employees and Mayor Fred Mancuso's recent appointments to the Housing Authority Board and the Recreation Advisory Commission seemed to be foremost on the minds of about 50 Carbondale residents who attended the city council meeting Monday night.

One resident, who chose to remain anonymous, said he lives on Coolidge Avenue and he asked the council how he would be able to make it up and down his steep street this winter with six employees of the city's street department laid off.

Council president Michael Tolerico said that the council met with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) union Local 87 before the public council meeting and he said the union will ask local banks to see it if would be possible for the furloughed city employees to take out personal loans with the guarantee that the city would eventually pay the loans back. The logic is that the personal loans would serve as paychecks and keep city employees working.

However, city solicitor John Cerra told the NEWS that no member of the board of trustees in any local bank would accept the personal loan idea because of the city's financial troubles. Cerra said even if the banks did decide to go along with such a plan, chances are that no city employee would risk taking out a city-backed personal loan, especially since they are eligible for unemployment compensation. Cerra also said that the people most hurt by the furloughs are the citizens of Carbondale, who will not receive the services that should be provided by city employees which their taxes have paid for.

Mayor Mancuso's appointments to the Recreation Advisory Commission and the Housing Authority Board were another hot issue during the council meeting and which immediately sparked debate between council members Abe Calnola and mayor-elect Charlotte Moro.

Disagreement between Calnola and the mayor-elect began with the announcement of Mayor Mancuso's two appointees to the Recreation Commission, Patrick Whittington, 175 Belmont Street, and Martin Andrews, 1 Hendrick Lane. Moro said that those two appointments, according to the Administrative Code, should have been made by the school board, not the mayor. Calnola stated he didn't think that the school board

Mayor's proposed 1984 budget does not mention deficit of $400,000

By MIKE PETROVSKY

In his 1984 proposed budget Mayor Fred Mancuso has made no provisions to raise property taxes or to pay off the current city deficit.

City Administrator Joseph Masco told the NEWS that the mayor gave no valid reason for not including a tax hike or any other possible solution to eliminate a city deficit of anywhere from $300,000 to $400,000.

Whatever the mayor's reasoning, it will be up to city council and mayor-elect Charlotte Moro to find a solution to the city's money problems when council rejects the mayor's budget and prepares one of its own as they did the last three years. Masco said the council should seriously consider a tax increase. To wipe out the current deficit in one year would take up to a 29 mill increase and would raise property taxes by 78 percent.

Masco said that council could cushion on the tax increase by getting what he calls a "tax note." According to Masco the tax note -- a plan Mayor Mancuso suggested last June -- would be the equivalent of the city getting a loan from a local bank at 10 or 11 per cent interest. Masco said if council adopts a similar plan the tax increase wouldn't seem as great because it would spread the millage increase over a period of ten years instead of hitting the taxpayers with a huge tax increase all at once.

Another way of lessening the taxpayers' burden would be collect delinquent taxes. It is estimated that the city receives about 89 per cent of the property taxes it is owed each year leaving 11 percent uncollected, or "delinquent." Masco said it is up to the county to collect the delinquent property taxes.

Another tax owed to the city is the amusement tax. The amusement tax is placed on pinball machines and video arcade machines found in local businesses. Out of the $6,000 current and delinquent taxes owed to the city the Mancuso budget shows city collections of only $270 last year. Masco said that the 1983 budget projected revenues from the amusement tax which the city neglected to collect in 1981 and in 1982 along with what it expected to receive from the tax in 1983. The city should collect $2,000 a year from the tax but Masco said that council did not make any provisions in last year's budget to pay a city employee to collect the tax. Masco also said that a high turnover rate of the pinball and video arcade machines makes it difficult to collect the tax.

"Businesses which may have had two machines in 1981, may have one in '82 and none in '83.

The city manager said the deficit, -- which he predicts could soar to $400,000 by the end of this year -- represents debts which include $144,000 that the city owes to the electric company; $100,000 that the city owes in federal and state payroll taxes; as much as $50,000 that the city should pay into the fire and police pension funds, and a $7,000 payment due on a ladder truck purcashed for the fire department. According to Masco the city should consider purchasing a new vehicle for the street department which would add about $20,000 to the deficit.

He added when council disregards the mayor's proposed budget this year it should not only consider a tax increase to control the deficit; but should also consider providing the new administration with a "workable" budget. The council-prepared budgets that the city has used over the last three years were just not "workable" and Masco puts part of the blame on council members and Mayor-elect Charlotte Moro.

"Mrs. Moro worked with the council on the budgets for the past three years and her record shows that not only did she vote each year to reject the mayor's budget proposals, she also voted each year to reject the budget she helped the council to prepare." He added that Mrs. Moro should "step down from her cloud and face reality because (when she takes office) she will find herself on a defferent side of the fence."

Contrary to an article which appeared in the Scranton Times on November 30, The mayor did revise his proposed budget on November 21 to include a $20,000 payment and a $5,000 interest payment for the Sinking Fund. Masco said that the Sinking Fuud was originally noted in the proposed budget as paid in full because a member of the mayor's staff mistook an eight for for a three and though the last payment on the Sinking Fund was made this year instead of 1988 when the final payment is scheduled to be made.

Local volunteer ambulance companies meet to discuss possible staffing of mobile unit

While the fate of the Carbondale-based mobile intensive care unit (Mobile II) still remains uncertain following the announcement by Saint Joseph's Hospital that it can no longer reimburse Community Medical Center for paramedic salaries, local volunteer ambulance corps have indicated that they will do whatever is necessary to keep Mobile II in the upvalley.

A meeting was held on November 30 at the William Walker Hose Company in Mayfield to discuss the problems of staffing Mobile II. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Cottage, William Walker, Forest City, Clifford, and Waymart volunteer ambulance companies as well as members of the original Mobile II committee.

The concensus was that the volunteer ambulance corps members (emergency medical technicians) would like to advance their skills by taking paramedic training and then staff the Mobile II unit with volunteers.

Barbara Frick, an emergency medical technician with several years of volunteer experience, explained that to become an emergency medical technician (EMT) one must complete a course of instruction that includes about 80 hours of instruction. The paramedic course entails about 200 hours of instruction. In the past, available funds limited the number of EMT's who were offered paramedic training. According to Mrs. Frick, some area doctors have volunteered their time to train local EMT's to become paramedics. There would be no cost for the course.

Mrs. Frick said that a committee was formed at the last meeting to do some research. At this point, no recommendations have been made.

The limiting factor is time. Mrs. Frick pointed out that it takes about 10 months to train a paramedic, so any attempt to man the mobile unit with volunteer paramedics is at least a year away.

"At this point most of us feel that Sister Cephas' proposal (to employ one paramedic and use a volunteer EMT on each shift) is the best one for the time being," Mrs. Frick said. "Our primary goal is just to keep the mobile unit here. We'd hate to lose it."

Carbondale General Hospital auxiliary presents payment on building fund pledge

Carbondale General Hospital women's auxiliary recently donated $4,000 to the hospital as a partial payment of their $125,000 pledge to Carbondale General's building fund. The money was raised through several successful projects, including a card party, Pioneer Days activities and a bake sale.

Presenting the check to Richard A. Pascoe, the hospital's executive director, are, left to right, auxiliary members Mary Louise Nepa and Mary Home.

In accepting the check, Pascoe said, "We are very grateful to the auxiliary for their hard work and generous donation. Their substantial contribution was a major factor in the success of our recent fund drive, which has surpassed its set goal. The women of the auxiliary are to be commended for their enduring loyalty and support Their of Carbondale General Hospital.

Dr. Leo Buscaglia, noted author, to speak on "Opening the Christmas Gift of Love"

Leo F. Buscaglia

By FATHER JOSEPH SICA
Exclusive to the Carbondale News

Leo F. Buscaglia, a native of California, a much-loved author, captivating and witty lecturer, inexhaustible traveler, will speak at the Carbondale Area High School, Saturday, December 10, beginning at 8 in the evening. The presentation is called: "Opening the Ribbon on Christmas Gift of Love," and is sponsored by the Parish Family of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.

Leo is a Professor of Education at the University of Southern California. He was twice named USC "Professor of the Year." He is the son of Italian immigrants and many of his lectures and writings are a sharing of his family life. A life of poverty, but as Leo tells us, "we were so poor, I never thought we were poor. We had joy, music, love, care, and laughter in our home. I though everyone else was poor, and we were rich!"

The author of eight books, all which carry the conviction that we have an infinite capacity for growth; in order to become fully alive we continually need to attempt to realize that potential and put it to use helping others. "Everybody has something that is completely unique to offer," he notes. "Isn't that challenge enough to get enthusiastic about yourself."

Millions of people of every age and in all walks of life are spellbound and uplifted by what Leo has to say. They eagerly share his written comments.

Though Dr. Buscaglia has authored or co-authored eight books, he is perhaps best known for LOVE, the book that grew out of the course of the same name which he taught at USC. The impetus of his class was a tragic incident which occured on the USC Campus and which personaly affected Dr. Buscaglia deeply. In LOVE, as in all his books, Leo attempts to share with others the discoveries he has made throughout his own lifetime of exploration and learning. Reflecting on his own enthusiasm for life, his writings have encouraged countless readers to reach out and celebrate their fullest potential for personhood and love.

Besides his teaching, traveling, and writing, Buscaglia is nationally known through his programs for the Public Broadcasting System - "Speaking of Love," "Living life fully with Leo," "Warmly, Leo," "The Art of Being Fully Human." When not lecturing, teaching, or writing, Dr. Buscaglia can be found savoring a good meal or hugging a new friend.

Leo has appeared on all major television talk shows. His most recent appearance was on 20-20 with Hugh Downs.

Father Andrew Gallia, Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, tells us the lecture is completely sold out. After its release in the newspaper back in June, the lecture attracted three thousand people from all over the state of Pennsylvania.

December 10 is an evening that all will remember, it's an evening that will challenge the listeners to accept the gift of life, build lasting and rewarding relationships, free yourself and others from labels, hangups, and trivia, teach the wonder of love to children, and forever rid yourself of loneliness and dispair.

The Carbondale NEWS will present an exclusive interview with Leo Buscaglia in its next issue.

After all is said, one has to admit, once in a while a person steps out from the crowd and becomes and international phenomenon, Doctor Leo Buscaglia is such a person.

Editor's note: Dr. Buscaglia's appearance in Carbondale is through his personal friendship with father Joseph Sica, of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. As a direct result of Dr. Buscaglia's appearance, a "Living, Loving, and Learning" scholarship will be established for a student for Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish who wishes to attend Sacred Heart High School.

Questions and some answers given at local meeting on school age drug, alcohol abuse

"My teen-ager refuses to quit drinking - what can I do about it?" "My father and mother both drink, why should't I?" "What are the police doing about the juvenile drug and alcohol problem?" "Can we have a drug and alcohol education program in all grades in our schools?"

These were just a few of the provocative paignant and, even perplexing questions presented by an audience of some 250 parents, students and educators to a panel of experts at the first school district area town meeting on school-age drug and alcohol abuse, according to Bill Shea, of the newly-formed Carbondale Task Force on School Age Drug and Alcohol Abuse. The panel members, well-versed in their given fields, were Elza Janz, director of St. Joseph's Drug and Alcohol Center; Dr. Arvind Desai, medical director of the center and member of the Lackawanna County Drug and Alcohol Commission; Police Chief Francis Dottle; Father Joseph Sica; mayor-elect Charlotte Moro, councilman Albert Calzola, Carbondale Area Board of Education member Felix Falvo, State Senator Robert Mellow, and task force representatives, Theresa Kull, Joseph Addley and Patrick Danchak.

Martin Lawler, principal of Carbondale Area High School and Sister Joan Quinn, principal of Sacred Heart High School served as moderators for the town meeting that followed the viewing of program 1, "The Chemical Society," hosted by First Lady Nancy Reagan, which presented the facts about school-age alcohol and drug abuse in communities across America.

The large attendance promises an even greater turnout at next week's town meeting when program 2, "Community Answers," hosted by Mrs. Reagan and co-hosts Willie Stargell, Rita Moreno, and Michael Landon, presents guidelines on the forming of a community task force to prevent and combat youth involvement with alcohol and drugs.

The meeting is set for Thursday, December 8, at 8 p.m. in the Carbondale Area Junior-Senior High School auditorium, followed by a question and answer session.

School-age alcohol and drug abuse can affect any of us in a given time or situation. Attending this meeting should be a priorty for every concerned citizen. Or, as the group slogan says it, "If you care, you'll be there."

Postal service offers tips on mailing those holiday boxes

"The Postal Service wants to help mailers get the best service," Joseph Zapotok, officer in charge of the Carbondale Post office said recently. He offered these tips for safe, timely delivery of your holiday packages:

- Address your package correctly and completly and use the right zip code.
- Use a sturdy container such as a corrugated box for items of average weight.
- Cushion each item in the container using crumpled or rolled newspapers, plastic chips or plastic or fiberboard inserts.
- Seal your parcel with reinforced filament tape.
- You don't have to use wrapping paper on boxes; simply cross out old addresses and clearly print the new address on one side of the parcel.
- Include the name and address inside the package, just in case the mailing label fall off - or becomes unreadable.
- Ask your postal clerk about delivery times and prices for Parcel Post, Priority Mail and Express Mail. Then decide which combinations of fast delivery and economy best meets your needs.

Zapotok also said the the post office sells mailing envelopes for small packages. A 6 x 10 inch envelope costs 30 cents, a 10½ x 16 inch costs 40 cents and a 14½ by 20 inch costs 50 cents.

The local officer in charge added that the post office sells stamp collection kits and commorative stamps with mint cancellations. "They make very nice Christmas presents," Zapotok said.